GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1465
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2004
EXPLORATION OF OIL BLOCKS IN CASPIAN SEA
Madhwaraj Smt. Manorama

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC has plans to invest in exploration of Caspian Sea oil blocks;

(b) the quantum of investment and yield of crude;

(c) the status of ONGC Videsh's past overseas investments in Sakhlain Oilfield (USSR) and Sudanese Oil facilities;

(d) whether India is still exploring the viability of overland gas/crude pipeline projects from Iran and Oman; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS AND PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR)

(a) & (b) : To enhance energy security of the country, ONGC-Videsh Limited (OVL) is pursuing the acquisition of equity oil as well as oil and gas exploration acreages and producing properties in several identified countries, including countries in the Caspian Sea area.

The proposal regarding OVL's participation in oilfields in Caspian Sea area is at an initial stage of consideration and, hence, the quantum of investment or the expected oil output cannot be estimated.

(c) : Limited production of oil and gas from Sakhalin-I project is expected from 2005-06. Full production of oil and gas from the field is expected from the last quarter of 2006-07.

Of the three Joint Ventures (JVs) formed by OVL in Exploration and Production (E&P) projects in Sudan, the Greater Nile Oil Project is already in commercial production. The other two projects are at the exploration stage.

The Pipeline Project in Sudan started on the 1st July 2004 and is expected to be completed by October 2005.

(d) & (e) : India and Iran agreed several years ago to explore the options of importing natural gas through pipeline, both offshore and onland. Negotiations in this matter are a continuing process. The proposal for the import of gas from Oman has not been found feasible.